

## **Directing the President to Remove All Forces from Afghanistan**

"I continue to have profound reservations about our troop commitments overseas, first with the war in Iraq, and more recently with President Obama's decision to escalate our presence in Afghanistan. History suggests that we will not be successful in stabilizing Afghanistan with military force. No one has and I don't think anyone will.

"Afghanistan today is perhaps the most corrupt country in the world, ranked next to last out of 180 by Transparency International. If you have a culture of corruption, it's hard to plant seeds of positive growth. Economic development through roads and water make the difference between people being thugs, and in some cases, feeding their family in any way they can.

"The magnitude of spending we're involved with also needs to be put in perspective: one million dollars per troop per year for the surge. That's \$7,000 worth of spending for each of the 14.5 million Afghan's in the work force, and 20 times what that worker will earn in an entire year. Yet for all that spending there is a dire need for the most basic of services. In the rural areas, 80% drink polluted water, only 10% have adequate sanitation.

"I have profound reservations about the course we're on, and the ability to generate positive long-term, fundamental changes that will persist over time.

"Congress has a voice and we can start reversing what I think is an inappropriate course in Afghanistan. While I don't support this particular resolution here today, I appreciate my colleague bringing it forward. I don't think we're going to end this struggle in 30 days, or even 30 weeks. Congress must consider how to redirect our efforts and involve Afghans themselves in moving forward: developing water, sanitation, education, and economic opportunities."